## Use of Protective Equipment When Suspect Drug Use (NEW)

Issued By: The Executive Director

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Criteria for Protocol

Recent spike in Fentanyl overdoses has created a concern regarding staff exposure to the drug when packing rooms or emptying lockers. In a number of situations within institutions and other agencies, staff have been exposed to the effects of Fentanyl when they have inadvertently touched a powder or something that was in contact with drugs laced with Fentanyl. This has caused a number of emergency response personnel to overdose and have to be administered Naloxone and taken to hospital.

Belkin House staff – ECRF, BCL, Shelter, PDP and Housekeeping all have the risk of being exposed to this deadly drug just by virtue of their responsibilities around packing up belongings, inspecting room and cleaning up after residents have left the various programs.

Specialized equipment – gloves, N95 masks, goggles, and others – are being provided for staff to use when packing rooms or unloading lockers. Staff should use this equipment, at all times, to mitigate the risk of coming into contact with substances or items that may have been contaminated with Fentanyl.

Our Policy & Procedures manual deals with the need to apply universal precautions when handling body fluids or unknown fluids. These universal precautions should also be applicable to any unknown substance or material found in a resident room or belongings.

Staff safety is paramount and no staff member should put themselves at risk. With the high possibility of overdosing just by coming into contact with drugs laced with Fentanyl, this increases the concern and need for staff to be overly cautious and vigilant when handling resident belongings and cleaning out lockers or packing rooms.

Minimum Safety Equipment:

Staff will use universal precautions when emptying a locker, packing a room or disposing of personal belongings. This includes but is not limited to the following:

* + - * Rubber gloves – double gloves should be used to avoid contact with unknown sources or chemicals
      * N95 Mask – to prevent inhalation of any powder or toxic fumes
      * Puncture resistant Kevlar gloves – to avoid being pricked by used needles

Emergency Shelter

Emptying Locker @ Curfew

Although emptying lockers of residents who failed to return for curfew is critical to the operational flow for intake of a new resident into the Shelter, Staff need to ensure that safety is a high priority. A quick check of the locker and belongings before emptying will provide an indication of any safety concerns. Staff should always at a minimum be wearing gloves and should be observing if any drugs or powder is evident during this process.

If anything is found staff should take precautions by donning further protective gear before removing the material, and the locker should be placed “off-limits” until

housekeeping can be called in to deal with any contaminate. This may mean that the new resident will need to store their belongings someplace secure until we are sure the locker is de-contaminated.

Sorting Abandoned Belongings

After someone has left the Shelter and we are going through their belongings before disposal, staff need to be cautious about being exposed to any chemical contaminants or being pricked by a needle or sharp object.

Staff should wear rubber gloves and Kevlar gloves to prevent any pricks. During the sorting of belongings, staff should be cautious of any drugs or bags of powder and should then take all steps to not be exposed to potential contaminants. If substances are found, staff should ensure that additional protective equipment and masks are used. Any personal documentation or material which should be kept for the client are to be placed in a separate plastic bag and sealed. The Shelter manager or assistant manager should be notified so that materials can be treated and de-contaminated before being returned to a client. All other items should be bagged and disposed of.

ECRF & BCL

Room Pack after Suspension

Staff should always don gloves and masks (optional) before entering a room to be packed. Staff should first do a visual inspection of the room to determine if there is any potential risk such as powder or obvious signs of drugs use. Staff should always err on the side of caution. If there is any suspicious contaminants then staff should put on extra PPE before beginning any packing.

All suspicious materials should be handled carefully and double bagged for disposal. Incident reports and communication to ECRF Manager and PO’s is important.

Housekeeping should also be notified so that they can take extra precautions when cleaning the room.

Any other items that are believed to have been contaminated should be put aside and dealt with separately.

Room Inspections

Staff should use universal precautions even when doing a room inspection. Staff should look for any potential contaminant during inspection and if located then the Manager & PO need to be notified and the room isolated until the proper PPE can be donned and the contaminant removed and the room cleaned.

PDP Caseworkers

Room Inspections

Caseworkers should at minimum have rubber gloves with them during all room inspections. If the client is suspected of using or if any unknown substance is found, extra PPE might be used to prevent possible contamination.

Room Packing

See room packing instructions for ECRF – these should be the same protocols used by the caseworkers.

Housekeeping / Janitorial

Housekeeping staff should use PPE when cleaning rooms, particularly when there might be the suspicion from ECRF or PDP staff that the exiting resident might have been in possession of drugs. Housekeeping staff should take precautions when handling items / furniture or cleaning areas that may have been exposed to a contaminant.